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[To be continued.]

XVII.—*Extracts from a few rough Notes of a Journey across the Pampas of Buenos Ayres to Tucuman, in 1835.* By JAMES TWEEDIE, Esq., addressed to Sir W. J. Hooker.

[Concluded from p. 104.]

MAY 8th. In the afternoon left this our dreary 3 weeks' abode, and the cattle being in good condition, travelled all night through a dark dense forest, where the road or rather path was so narrow that 2 carts must wait, should they chance to meet, until the trees have been felled so as to permit of a passage. The numerous feet and wheel tracks raised such a dust as hung over us in heavy clouds all the way, a perfect calm prevailing in the air, and the travellers, carts, and cattle were all of one colour, enveloped or buried in a covering of dry dust. In the morning, about daylight, my driver falling asleep, the bullocks deviated a little from the path and upset my waggon. Fortunately, though I fell from a considerable height and some heavy bales of cloth tumbled upon me, I escaped with only a slight bruise on one of my legs. Next day travelled through a saline country where there was no water and only salt shrubs for the poor animals to eat, and arrived in the evening at the little village of Atamisco, so named from a finely scented shrub, which grows in great abundance about it. Scarcely any vegetable was seen except some coarse herbage, upon which flocks of goats were browsing.

10th. In the morning we arrived at the Rio Pitambella, where we were again occupied 2 days crossing it in 2 canoes fixed together by poles tied across them, by which means each load was carried over at one time. The empty carts were drawn across by bullocks as at the Rio Saladillo. At this pass, having once more time to botanize for 3 days, I found

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several species that were new to me, especially of grass, some strong plants of *Goodenia tuberosa*, *Barba del muerto*, 2 sp., and many things I did not know. While here, I entered my 60th year, and falling into a sort of melancholy fit, at remembering that I was now 9000 miles distant from my native country, and at the present time surrounded with a class of people more barbarous than the worst tribes of savages, men who rejoice in the difficulties and dangers of others, nothing affording them more delight than seeing a person fall from his horse or attacked by an infuriated bull, events which here very frequently happen ;—these being, I say, the prevailing sentiments of my mind on the anniversary of my birth, my fellow-traveller, a Dr. Mernoz, recommended as a cordial to the spirits, a drop of wine ; so extracting the cork of, alas ! my last bottle of Madeira, he and I sat down to enjoy it, and soon drained the flask.

13th. Having now completed crossing our last difficult river in the way to Tucuman, a more pleasant tract of country opened upon us, consisting of gently undulated ground with some fine varieties of trees and shrubs, principally of *Mimosas*. For 2 days, however, we travelled through a parched district, where neither food nor water for the beast could be procured. No cattle were to be seen between the Rio Pitambella and San Jago, a distance of 26 leagues, except a few goats, the kids of which we bought at about sixpence each.

17th. At sunset halted on the summit of an elevated ridge, about 1 league from San Jago, intending to enter the town before the morning ; but a cloud of hail with a strong gale of wind passing over us in the night, the cattle were so much scattered by it among the dry forests in search of food, that we could not collect them till sunset. On looking out of my dusty den in the cart at sunrise, the air having been beautifully cleared by the gale of the night, I beheld one of the most sublimely grand sights that could be imagined ; the towering summits of the snow-covered Andes, their sharp peaks of various forms, heights, and sizes, stretching up among the long lines of light clouds that lazily hung in the atmosphere ; their backs romantically variegated with black and white, the thinner snowy mantle having been melted by the sun from the

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projecting points, while the valleys still lay dark and dense in frozen shade. This view of those alpine regions was most gratifying to me, and my ever-busy memory presently recalled to me a similar scene, when, in my youthful years, I had stood upon the hills of the Upper Ward of Lanarkshire, and with my face turned towards north-west, gazed on the mountains of Argyleshire and the Western Highlands, where, in the spring, the snow, melting from the exposed parts of the rocks, leaves alternate streaks of black and white. This ridge of the Cordilleras lies in the province of Catam, distant, at the time, upwards of 50 miles in a straight line on our left hand, and in a direction W.N.W.

18th. Halted about a mile and half from San Jago, having adopted another road, by which we should avoid going through the town, but sent 2 waggons thither with goods, which being obliged to cross the river San Jago, did not return to us till noon of the second day, 5 hours being required to pass the river. In this district vegetation varied considerably: in all other places of the woods, the plains were covered with a yellow-berried suffruticose plant, which gave the ground at a distance much the appearance of the holms of Clyde when gay with rag-weed; but though this shrub abounded so much, almost to the exclusion of other vegetation, neither bird nor beast appeared to touch its foliage or fruit. Here I found a strong broad-leaved *Asclepias*, on the edge of the river several smaller perennial species; but the most attractive tree here is the *Mistol*, a large branching tree something like a big pear tree of the Tollo family of Buenos Ayres; the fruit much resembling a Kentish cherry, and which the natives gather carefully and dry as they would do figs: when these fruits are used they are steeped in warm water and then worked up into a dough of maize meal, kernels and all, and rolled into balls about 4 oz. weight, which are eaten, baked and prepared in various ways, being the principal food on which the natives depend, except a few goats; for the dearth of water and pasture, with the prevalence of dense forests and salinos, prevent the rearing of cattle. Except a few spots near the town, where maize and pompions are grown, I saw hardly any cultivated ground for many leagues around San Jago.

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Being now only 40 leagues from the town of Tucuman and my patience quite exhausted, I quitted the tropa, and accompanying the owner of 32 mules which were going to the mines of Peru, I started with him on the 20th. It proved no easy job for the 4 men and the proprietor to drive these animals, they strayed so much into the thorny brushwood; and though the driver was faced from top to toe with a hide protector, he had much difficulty in making his way through the woods, especially where the *Chaneos* abounded. These delays however allowed me to botanize and to gather a few seeds, for of flowering specimens there were none. About 9 o'clock we halted in the woods and kindled a fire to prepare our asado for supper, but the night proved so extremely cold that we could not sleep, so we started at about 3 in the morning and travelled till sunrise, when we arrived at the site of a few ranchos. Here we tied our horses to trees, entered the most decent looking dwelling, which proved to be the principal inn, as I suppose, of the country, for few were the habitations of any kind that we had seen, and called for something for breakfast. The morning being very chilly we were ushered into the principal apartment, which was nothing more than a roughly finished hut, covered with a sort of long grass, its sides not even plastered with mud, only stuffed with straw and sticks between the posts; in the centre was a large fire of sticks, a welcome sight for our cold persons; this fire-place was a circle of large coarse stones, 6 feet in diameter, placed in the centre of the room, and holding as many ashes as seemed a twelvemonth's accumulation. Four women, 6 naked children, and a lot of dogs, cats, and poultry surrounded the fire, all contending which should get the largest share of an overplus of boiled pompions which had been left from last night's supper. One old woman was busy scraping the outer skin from more pompions for the family's breakfast, while the others sat idly looking on. The mode of preparing the pompions for food was to slit the largest in halves, and then putting them into the hottest part of this enormous fire, to fill the hollow or concave side with hot charred wood. While they they were thus roasting the landlord desired that the cow should be brought in and milked, which was done ac-

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cordingly, the black boy who performed the operation using the only utensil apparently in the house to receive the milk, namely, the huge pot or boiler from which the dogs had been licking the relics of pompions, some of which still adhered to its sides: this was set on the fire; and by the time the milk was, boiled the pompions were sufficiently roasted, when scraping off with difficulty the black and ashy skin, I put some of the pulp into the milk and managed to make a tolerable breakfast. This is the way in which people live in this country; nothing better or more cleanly is to be procured for fare; we all gathered round the pot of hot milk which was set on the ground, when also the roasted pompions were laid at our feet, all covered with black wood ashes; for plates and spoons we had horns, halved and a little bent; for seats, the skulls of horses; and for a table, the clay floor of the hut. There was no choice: we paid about sixpence each for our meal and set off again. After travelling till mid-day, the weather being hot and dry, we stopped for 2 hours at noon, turning the cattle out to feed and lying down ourselves to sleep, and pursued our way in the afternoon, the country being so open and level that we drove the mules before us almost at a gallop. The owner of these animals had left us in the morning, accompanied by his servant, preferring another route to Tucuman, and I remained with the driver, that I might have the more time to botanize. At night we stopped at a posthouse called Vinora, 19 leagues from Tucuman, where we rested till the afternoon of the next day; during which time I examined the productions of the neighbourhood. I saw some fine trees of the great fan palm, a strange species of *Cestrum*, with very large yellow flowers, and a *Solanum*, apparently brownish, with white fruit of the size and appearance of hens' eggs; the latter was generally growing in open grass fields, where the plant, about 3 feet high, very thorny, and loaded with this singular looking fruit, was a striking object. Also a suffruticose *Buddleia*, which the natives call sage, and use as such.

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24th. Started very early this morning, having been refreshed by a comfortable night's rest, for we had slept by the side of our large wood fire, sheltered on the weather side by long clean grass waving above us. Our cattle too were recruited by the fine grass they had eaten during the night, and we took to the road in high spirits at the prospect of soon finishing our long and arduous journey, a hope which was realized about 4 in the afternoon, when we entered Tucuman. The 2 last days' journey was the most pleasing and interesting of all; the noble Andes lay on our left hand, thick fog covering part of their sides, above which their snowy summits soared bright and clear; often we approached within a few miles distance of the mountains. The vegetation too became more varied as we advanced into the warm and more humid climate which Tucuman enjoys, so as to be quite interesting. Having reached the farm-house belonging to the owner of our carts, who had arrived only the day before, he welcomed us kindly to his dwelling: the first thing offered to a stranger here is a cigar, then matte; after which we visited his orangery, where I saw some trees of almost incredible magnitude and with equally incredibly enormous crops of fruit, whether considered as to number, size, or quality. Some of these trees could not be less than 40 feet high, with tops high in proportion, the points of the lower branches resting on the ground; and the oranges of an uniformly large size, equally interspersed all over and among the whole trees. The beautiful hue of the fruit, which was generally ripe, added to the interesting appearance of these trees. He had no other garden, but noble fields of sugar cane and some rice grounds: a mill for cleaning the latter article was also on the farm. At night this kind person sent one of his servants to conduct us to the only coffee-house in the town of Tucuman, with orders to re-

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25th. Having arrived yesterday, I had the opportunity this morning, as I anticipated, of seeing what I supposed would be a grand military show, it being the anniversary of the freedom of this country from the Spanish yoke, an event which is celebrated with rejoicings throughout the Argentine provinces, especially at Tucuman, where independence was first proclaimed, and where a brick pillar still marks the exact spot of this proclamation. I consequently supposed that the military would sport their best uniforms on the occasion, and that something very grand should be exhibited : but at about 8 in the morning 200 men assembled in the Gran Plaz of the town, these being the militia of the country, as there is now no standing army ; their uniform was rags, of all colours, however, and most of them were bare-footed ; the other had old shoes or torn slippers, with hats much like the fragments of bee-skeps, the crown being generally covered with coarse uncut wool, undyed and in the state in which it comes from the sheep's back. Clothes they had none, but rough pouchos, loosely hanging over the body, a tattered dirty shirt beneath, but no jacket or trousers. They fired a *feu de joie* and dispersed. At night the town was illuminated with lumps of tallow, put into square thick pieces of *Agave* leaves, a hollow being made in them, and filled with the grease. These chandeliers were set on the window sills in place of lamps or lanterns. (For a further description of Tucuman, with its fine scenery, &c. see the pamphlet of Alvardi published in 1834.)

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Ann. Nat. Hist. Vol. 4. No. 23. Nov. 1839. o

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one of our carts having overset in a Bocacha pit, a day's travelling was lost, and the next morning, when crossing the Rio de Tucuman, 5 miles only from the town, the fracture of an axle caused a similar delay. Three days after we recrossed the same stream near Vinora, and it may be needful to remark that we had to pass over it at four different places, at all of which it bears different names. Thus, its first appellation is Rio de San Magill, this being the name of the ridge of the Cordilleras where it rises, and indeed the proper name of the town of Tucuman itself, which is situated close to that mountain pass. At San Jago the river is called the same: and again, at the village of Pitambola, the Rio de Pitambola, while further down the number of willows that clothe its banks give it the appellation of Rio Saucio, under which name it enters the Paraña near Santa Fè. Having crossed it at Vinora, we entered upon a fine road, lately cleared by the government of San Jago, the first and only benefit I ever heard of their rendering to the country. Immediately after leaving this forest we enter the town of San Jago, a most miserable place, nothing growing about it but some bare trees, on the branches of which the goats were browsing. Two miles after quitting it I observed a red cloud rising in the S.W.; it was an immense flight of red locusts, which passing over us made the sun appear like blood. Next day the wind having shifted, these insects were driven again on our line of road, where they were mostly resting on the tops of the trees, which looked as if studded with red blossoms. Nothing else worthy of notice occurred till we came to the Rio Secunda: when we were going to Tucuman this was a river 4 feet deep and nearly 200 yards wide, but now presented only a bed of drifting white sand.

Near Cruz Alta we observed the smoking ruins of some Ranchos which the Indians had burnt the preceding day, and therefore took a more northerly direction to keep out of their way.

Crossing Rio Carcauñon, one of the shaft bullocks got loose; and the other having all the weight of the great cart and load thrown upon him, one of his horns with part of the skull was dashed in and the poor animal drowned. This was an unlucky day, another bullock having suddenly dropped down

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On reaching Ponto Morgues, 21 miles from Buenos Ayres, I took a horse and left the Tropa, which did not get to town till 5 days after, so bad are the roads close to the great metropolis of the Argentine Republic. I made my way home that very night that I left the carts, 7 months after setting out, and so much was I disfigured with the effects of weather and sun, to say nothing of dirty and tattered garments, that several of my old acquaintances did not know me.

Thus I have given a detail of my pleasure trip across the vast plains of Buenos Ayres, a journey during which I may say that I have travelled on my own feet nearly 2000 miles, viz. from the Rio Segero on the N.E. to the foot of the Cordillera on the N.W., and seen, said, and done many things, with which it would be superfluous and impertinent to trouble you.

XVIII.—*On the Laurus Cassia of Linnæus, and the Plants producing the Cassia Bark of Commerce.* By ROBERT WIGHT, M.D.*

MY attention was first directed to this subject by a communication from Government, in which I am requested to endeavour to ascertain “whether the common Cassia Bark of the markets of the world is a thicker and coarser portion of the bark of the genuine cinnamon plant or tree, or whether it is the bark of a plant not analogous to the cinnamon plant or tree.”

Before it was possible to return a satisfactory answer to this question, it seemed incumbent on me to ascertain what plant *Linnæus* meant to designate under the name of *Laurus Cassia*, and whether it was probable the plant so called could supply all the bark passing under that name in the markets of the world. This primary, but most difficult inquiry was rendered indispensable by the, generally supposed, ridiculous assertion of Mr. Marshall, that the leaves, and the bark of the trunk and branches of the *Laurus Cassia* of *Linnæus*, so far from being

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